

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year ended 31st December, 1949

To the Sanitary Authority of the Borough of Welshpool.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary conditions of the Borough of Welshpool during the year ended 31st December, 1949.

The Report is drawn up in accordance with the instructions contained in the Welsh Board of Health circular number 2(50). (Wales).

1. Vital Statistics

Area of the Borough:— 20,427 Acres.

POPULATION:— 5865, an increase of 48 on the figure given for 1948.

BIRTHS:—

Live Births

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	68	59	127
Illegitimate	3	2	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	71	61	132
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Still Births

Legitimate	2	0	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	2	0	2
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Birth Rates

Live Birth Rate (per 1000 estimated population) : 22.4.
(compared with 16.7 for England and Wales)

Still Birth Rate (per 1000 estimated population) : 0.34
(compared with 0.39 for England and Wales)

DEATHS:

	Male.	Female.	Total.
All causes	33	33	66

Death Rate (per 1000 estimated civilian population) : 11.3.
(compared with 11.7 for England and Wales)

Infant Mortality

Deaths of Infants under One Year of age:

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	4	0	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0
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Total	4	0	4
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Deaths from Diarrhoea under the Age of Two years : Nil.

Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 Live Births) : 30.3. (compared with 32.0 for England and Wales)

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

	1947	1948	1949
Population	5856	5817	5865
Live Birth Rate	20.73	21.8	22.4
Still Birth Rate	0.34	0.52	0.34
Death Rate	12.3	11.7	11.3
Infant Mortality Rate	24.5	15.7	30.3

2. Causes of Deaths during the Year

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	2	0	2
Influenza	1	2	3

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Cancer of the Stomach and Duodenum	0	2	2
Cancer of all other sites	4	3	7
Diabetes	0	1	1
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	2	7	9
Heart Diseases	7	7	14
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	2	4	6
Bronchitis	2	2	4
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	0	1
Ulcers of the Stomach o Duodenum	1	1	2
Appendicitis	0	1	1
Nephritis	2	1	3
Premature Birth	1	0	1
Congenital Malformation or Birth Injury	3	0	3
Road Traffic Accidents	1	1	2
All other causes	4	1	5
Total	33	33	66

3. Infectious Diseases

During the Year the following Infectious Diseases were notified:—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Whooping Cough	3	1	4
Measles	6	19	25
Pneumonia	2	3	5
Influenzal Pneumonia	3	4	7
Scarlet Fever	2	3	5
Ophthalmia neonatorum	0	1	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	6	0	6

Total number of cases of Infectious Disease notified : 53.

There were no cases of Diphtheria or of Non-Pulmonary

Tuberculosis.

By arrangement with the County Medical Officer of Health, cases of Infectious Disease (other than Tuberculosis) are, when necessary, admitted to the Isolation Hospital at Monkmoor, near Shrewsbury.

TUBERCULOSIS. Cases of suspected Pulmonary or Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis are referred by the General Practitioners to the County Tuberculosis Physician, Dr. G. O. Thomas and the Assistant Physician, Dr. H. Pick. Clinics are held at the Welshpool Memorial Hospital on the first and third Mondays in each month at 10 a.m. The Physician also visits patients at their homes (by arrangement with their medical attendants) and maintains supervision of all tubercular patients during the course of their illness. In a number of cases treatment with Streptomycin and P.A.S. is given in the patient's home, under the supervision of the patient's own Doctor. The patient, thus, is able to commence his treatment while awaiting admission to Hospital or Sanatorium.

Patients from this area are treated at the Tuberculosis Hospital, Machynlleth, at the North Wales Sanatorium, Denbigh, and at the South Wales Sanatorium, Talgarth, Breconshire.

I wish to thank the Tuberculosis Physician and his Assistant for the excellent work they continue to do in this area, and for their help and co-operation at all times.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. M. I. Jackson (who recently left the district) for the invaluable work he did in the County whilst he was Tuberculosis Physician

4. Local Health Services under Part III of the National Health Service Act, 1946.

MATERNITY SERVICES. Ante-natal and Post-natal clinic are held each week at the Welshpool Memorial Hospital, under the supervision of the patient's own Doctor, who is in

each case a member of the General Practitioner Staff of the Hospital.

The number of cases wishing to be confined in Hospital has greatly increased during the past few years, resulting in a severe shortage of beds for maternity cases. A number of cases have to be refused admission and have to make other arrangements. Emergency cases, complicated cases and mothers who are having their first babies are always admitted. With the prospect of a new Maternity Ward being built at the Hospital in the near future, it is hoped that this shortage will soon be relieved.

Excellent work is being done by our two District Nurses, Sister Cotes for the Inner District and Nurse Ellis for the Outer District, in the Domiciliary Midwifery Service which is under the supervision of the County Medical Officer of Health. The Nurses refer each case for an ante-natal examination to the patient's own Doctor, and the standard of their work is very high.

A Child Welfare Clinic and Clinic for the care of the Nursing mother and her child is held each month under the supervision of the County Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer.

At this clinic arrangements can be made for the Vaccination and Immunisation of the children, a service which can also be provided by the General Practitioner under the National Health Service.

The Ambulance Service in this area is being very efficiently carried out by the members of the Welshpool Division of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, whose members (both drivers and attendants) give their services voluntarily. I am pleased to note that greater interest is being taken in the work of the Brigade, and a strong and keen Cadet Division (the future drivers and attendants of the Ambulance) has been formed,

The Mental Health Service is administered partly by the Mid-Wales Hospital Management Committee and partly by the local Health Authority, the Montgomeryshire County Council. A psychiatric Clinic is held each Monday afternoon at the County Infirmary, Newtown, where patients are seen by appointment by the Visiting Psychiatrist, Dr. B. J. Hand. I wish to thank Dr. Hand for the very efficient work he has done during the past year.

Venereal Diseases are not notifiable in this area, but any case brought to my notice (there were none during the past year) is referred to the V.D. centre at Shrewsbury for treatment.

5. National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 47—Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention

No action was taken by the Council in any case under this section during the year.

6. WATER SUPPLY

(a) Town

(a) Rainfall figures for the year:—

	inches		inches
January	1.51	July	1.80
February	1.15	August	1.55
March	1.36	September	1.16
April	2.16	October	4.35
May	3.22	November	4.40
June	.63	December	3.94
Total for year			27.23

This compares with 34.41 in 1948 and 27.09 in 1947.

(b) For the first time since 1922, restrictions in the use of water had to be taken in order to safeguard the supplies, for a period of five weeks, the town's water was turned off from 10p.m. to 6a.m. and at the end of the drought (in Oct-

ober) the water levels in the three pools were as follows:—

Lower Pool	8ft. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins. down
Middle Pool	9ft. 6ins. „
Top Pool	4ft. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ins. „

It is estimated that this represented a storage of approximately one million gallons, and as the supply into the reservoir was then reduced to 51,336 gallons per day, this was equivalent to 20 days supply. In view of the action taken to supply 12,000 gallons per day to industry for approx. 100 days, this result is considered satisfactory. Although this decision kept 100 men in work, the urgency of linking up the supplementary source from Trinity Well needs no stressing.

Minimum waste line was 1500 gallons per day. Consumption averaged 110,000 gallons per day.

(c) 81 samples were submitted for bacteriological analysis; 11 of these were for private supplies, the remaining 70 chiefly concerned the Trinity Well Water which it is hoped will be available as a Supplementary source in the very near future.

(d) During the year 20 new houses were connected to the Town Supply, bringing the total to 1417 houses, 183 shops etc., 3 farms, 2 small holdings. Total 1605.

(e) An extension of the town mains to Pool Quay has been put in hand in order to provide water to the new Agricultural houses being erected in this village. The estimated cost is £4410 and the work involves the laying of approx. 2 miles of 6in. main—this being the size required for the proposed County Scheme.

(b) **Guildsfield and Groes**

There was difficulty in maintaining the water supply in these two villages. Fourteen new houses were connected

to the system during the year and the consumption increased from 1600 gallons per day to 3000. By September 13th the quantity of water in storage was reduced from 150,000 gallons, to 22,500 gallons, the supply of spring water then being 1,516 gallons per day. As this storage represented only 15 days supply, raw water from the Guilsfield brook was utilised by arrangement with Sir Gerald Trevor. This difficulty is likely to recur until the contemplated extension of the town mains is put in hand.

(c) Trewern Water Supply

The Gelli water supply scheme involving the laying of nearly 4 miles of 4in. main has been practically completed, the estimated cost being £4500 and connection to 16 new houses at Trewern have been made. 1 farm, 1 small holding and 4 houses en route were also given a supply.

The minimum yield of this spring was 12,000 g.p.d. and it will be interesting to note the increase in consumption, etc., and revenue from this extension when it is fully developed.

(d) Castle Caerinion Water Supply

A scheme for pumping water from St. Garmons Well into an overhead steel tank for supply water to this village and the new housing site was prepared and this has now received the sanction of the Welsh Board of Health.

(e) County Water Scheme

A committee representative of all Local Authorities in the County except one has been formed and instructions have been given to the County Consulting Engineer to prepare evidence for a Public Inquiry into the proposal to take water from the Rivers Clywedog, Gam and Twrch, which will be made by the Welsh Board of Health. In the meantime, it has been agreed that all water main extensions which co-incide with the lines of the proposed trunk mains shall be made in "county sizes."

7. Milk

During the year, the responsibility for the control of milk supplies and the registration of premises passed from the Town Council. Prior to this six premises in the Borough had been registered under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1938.

8. Food

49 complaints concerning bad food were investigated and action taken in all cases. Summary of food condemned is as under:—

2285 tins of food; 635 lbs. meat; 242 lbs. fish;
115 lbs. fat; 34 lbs. cheese; 16 lbs. figs; 11 lbs. of
butter; 7lbs. prunes and $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. margarine.

These condemnations required the service of 331 separate certificates to the Traders concerned which causes a very considerable amount of supervision and clerical work.

Steps were taken to adopt the Ministry of Health Model Byelaws, under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, relating to the handling, wrapping and delivery of food and sale of food in the open air.

9. Drainage and Sewers

(a) The construction of two new sewage disposal works was started during the year—one for Trewern Village was completed and the other for Guilsfield will be finished in 1950. A tender for site preparation works at Pool Quay has also been accepted, which provided for dealing with the sewage from the village of Pool Quay. 17 new houses were connected to the Town Sewers, 14 at Guilsfield and 16 at Trewern.

Negotiations for the transfer of the Sewage Disposal Plant at Buttington are in hand, but were not being pressed owing to the fact that new houses at Buttington will not be possible for some months,

(b) Gauging of the town sewer was put in hand to ascertain how far they could cope with additional flows from various housing estates in the town, without causing surcharge difficulty and possible nuisance. Two storm water overflows were built on the system and repair works were put in hand which have greatly improved existing conditions and which will allow of the lands at BORFA GREEN and OLDFORD being fully developed without enlarging the size of the outfall mains.

(c) The results of the strenuous efforts of the Council to improve the amenities in the built-up area of the town and those of the rural parts of the Borough call for special commendation. They will certainly influence the standard of public health and have an important bearing on the development of agriculture in this district.

10. Sanitary Inspections

Drains to three new private houses were examined and passed. Similar action was taken in the case of 47 Council Houses.

Six notices re defective house drains were all completed with, as were three in respect of dangerous structures, 15 defects in dwelling houses, one relating to a Bakehouse and two to Factories without W.C. accommodation. There were also three notices of non-compliance with byelaws and 13 for wastage of water through defective fittings.

In all 120 notices were served during the year.

11. Disinfection

Following outbreaks of infectious disease four houses were disinfected.

12. Verminous Premises

Ten houses suspected of being in a verminous condition were disinfested.

13. Infestation Order.

The arrangements for dealing with Rodent destruction were continued and the results were as follows:—

All shops were inspected and action taken in five cases, and at three warehouses good results being obtained. The refuse tip was visited on five occasions, the average “kill” being 60 per treatment. Six monthly maintenance work was also carried out on the town sewers there being 45 “takes” and 39 “no takes.” No complaints were received during the year from the school canteens in Welshpool, but there were three treatments for rats at the Guilsfield school, which resulted in the premises being cleared.

The total number of baits laid in the Borough of Welshpool, Montgomery and Forden R.D.C. was 1700. Poison baits taken were 1300, which is estimated to have killed 3250 rats.

1200 leaflets were distributed in Welshpool, offering free treatment but this led to only five notifications. Lack of co-operation is the greatest difficulty experienced in the work.

14. Registration of Ice Cream Retailers

There were four new registrations during the year, bringing the total for the Borough up to ten.

15. House Refuse

(a) Weekly refuse collections take place from all houses in the town, all villages in the Borough and all houses en route. Disposal is by controlled tipping on waste land conveniently situate about half-a-mile from the town centre.

(b) At the request of Forden R.D.C. a fortnightly collection takes place from the Berriew—Garthmyl—Forden district which appears to be giving satisfaction.

(c) There is a weekly collection of Salvage from the shops and business premises. As there was a financial loss

on the collections from house properties in the town and district, this part of the service has been discontinued.

16. Rivers and Streams

No action necessary.

17. Closet Accommodation

No change.

18. Shops and Offices

The provision of the Shops Act were complied with and no court action was found necessary.

19. Smoke Abatement

No action necessary.

20. Schools

All schools are periodically inspected. The extension of water supplies to the village will result in a change from pail closets to water carriage system when the necessary funds are available.

21. Housing

(a) 47 new Council houses were completed during the year. 17 at Maesowen, 14 at Guilsfield and 16 at Trewern. There were also three erected for private owners making a total of 50 for the Borough.

(b) Approval to a scheme for the erection of a further eleven houses on Bronwylfa Road was obtained from the Welsh Board of Health and work on these was started.

(c) A start on 8 new agricultural houses at Pool Quay was made in November.

(d) Approval to the layout scheme for 24 houses and village hall at Castle Caereinion has been obtained from the

Welsh Board of Health and plans to proceed with twelve houses as a first instalment are in hand.

(e) Approval to a further six houses at Trewern was also obtained and the work started.

(f) The development of BORFA GREEN lands has also received consideration and plans for 38 houses have been prepared by the Council's Consulting Architect—Mr. Mervyn Edwards.

22. Overcrowding

Two cases of overcrowding were notified. These were examined and reported on.

The section of the Report dealing with the Rainfall, Water supply, Housing, etc., was kindly supplied by the Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector and the Water Inspector.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Town Clerk (Mr. J. Ben Davies) the Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector (Captain W. M. Evans) and the Water Inspector (Mr. E. B. Davies) for their help in the preparation of this Report and for their assistance and advice throughout the year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

D. R. B. MATHIAS,

Medical Officer of Health.

"COUNTY TIMES," PRINTERS, WELSHPOOL.
